

THE ANTICHRIST AS TEMPLE BUILDER

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The following is excerpted from the *ISRAEL: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE*. ISBN 978-1-58318-116-4. This is a package consisting of a 234-page illustrated book, a video series, and a series of PowerPoint/Keynote presentations for teachers. The package covers all of the major facets pertaining to Israel in a technologically cutting-edge way: geography, culture, archaeology, history, current events, and future prophetic events. The series begins with an amazing aerial flyover to highlight major sites in the land of Israel. Book \$9.95; 5 DVDs \$29.95; Keynote or PowerPoint presentations \$34.95 (Keynote is the Apple equivalent of PowerPoint.) Discounted packages: Book & DVD \$34.95; Book & DVD & Keynotes or PowerPoints \$69. www.wayoflife.org, 866-495-4143

Bible prophecy associates the Antichrist with the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:4-12).

Here we see that the Third Temple will definitely be rebuilt, but it will be a place for the worship of the Antichrist.

The mystery of iniquity has been operating for 2,000 years, and this is the devil’s program to place his man on the throne of the world. Thus, there are two spiritual programs operating in the world today during the Church Age: God’s program of world evangelism and the calling out of a people for His name among all nations (Romans 11:25), and the devil’s program to resist God’s work and to bring in the Antichrist.

There is One that withholds the devil’s program. We believe that this is the Holy Spirit, who came from Heaven on the day of Pentecost to empower the churches for worldwide evangelism (Acts 1:8). Thus, as long as it is God’s will to continue saving Gentiles and building the churches, the devil cannot bring his plan to fruition. God is in ultimate control. Daniel says the

timing of the Antichrist's work is "appointed" and "determined" (Dan. 11:29, 35, 36). It will not happen until God allows it to happen.

The time will come when the Restrainer will be taken out of the way, and then the Antichrist will be revealed. This refers to the Rapture of church-age saints. The Holy Spirit is the omnipresent God, and in that sense He is everywhere at all times, but in another sense He came into the world at Pentecost to perform a particular work and He will depart at the Rapture when that work is accomplished.

The Antichrist's appearance will be accompanied both by Satanic deception and by strong delusion sent by God as a judgment upon those who reject the truth. Those who think they can wait until these events begin to happen and get saved at that time are foolish. Those who have heard and rejected the Gospel of Jesus Christ will be blinded. Note that God does not blind arbitrarily; He blinds those who reject the truth. Every man has a choice. Christ gives light to every man (John 1:9).

The Antichrist's appearance will be accompanied by miracles. This will be part of the Satanic deception. There will be signs and lying wonders. The Jews demanded a sign (Mat. 12:39), and though Christ performed mighty miracles by the power of God, they rejected Him. The Antichrist and his false prophet will perform lying wonders by the power of Satan and the Jews will receive him. Every mention of miracles at the end of the church age pertains to Satanic miracles. See also Matthew 24:24; Revelation 13:11-15.

A visitor is reminded of the Temple on every hand in Israel today. It is even on their coins. The 1/10 shekel features a menorah. The 1/2 shekel has a 7th-century lyre of the type that was used in the Temple. The menorah is also the symbol of the Israeli Knesset or Parliament. There is a large one right outside the main gates and another one in a little garden at the entrance from the main road.

A majority of Jews in Israel want to see the Temple rebuilt.

A 2003 poll by the *Jerusalem Post* found that 80% are in favor.

This is a dramatic change from the past, when only a small percentage supported this. In 1986, David Shipler wrote in his book *Arab and Jew*, "During my five years in Jerusalem [1979-84], the idea of building a Third Temple in place of Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock evolved from a wild notion held by a very few fringe militants into a goal embraced and legitimized by parts of the established right wing."

In March 2010 posters calling for the building of the Third Temple appeared on buses plying eastern Jerusalem routes. The posters, sponsored by Our Land of Israel, featured a depiction of the Temple occupying the place of the Dome of the Rock mosque and a Hebrew phrase that translates, "May the Bais Hamikdosh [Jerusalem temple] be rebuilt speedily and within our

days.” A leader of Our Land of Israel, Baruch Marzel, said, “We’re representing the truth, in front of everyone, and saying out loud what every Jew believes. That the Third Temple needs to be built immediately on the Temple Mount and that the mosque should not be there” (*Jerusalem Post*, May 29, 2010). Predictably, the posters caused a storm of protest from Muslims and were removed after a couple of days.

In the late 1960s **the Temple Mount Faithful** (the full name is the Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful) was established to rebuild the Temple. It’s leader, Gershon Salomon, is a descendant of Rabbi Avraham Shlomo Zalman Zoref, who in the early 1800s was one of the pioneers of the modern movement to prepare for the rebuilding of the Temple. Zoref even sent one of his sons overseas to locate the “ten lost tribes” of Israel, but the rabbi’s life was cut short when he was assassinated by Arabs. The great grandson Salomon is a military officer who has fought in most of Israel’s modern wars, beginning with the War of Independence. During a battle in 1958 on the Golan Heights, a battle in which his company of 120 Israeli soldiers was ambushed by thousands of Syrians, Salomon was run over by a tank and seriously injured (he claims he actually died). When the Syrians were about to shoot him to make sure he was dead, they suddenly ran away, leaving the battlefield in the hands of the little company of Israelis. The Syrians later reported to UN officers that they had seen thousands of angels around Salomon. He says that during that experience he saw the light of God and he knew he still had work to do, which was the rebuilding of the Temple and the preparation of the “coming of Messiah ben David.” Salomon was one of the soldiers that liberated the Temple Mount in 1967.

The Temple Mount Faithful has prepared plans for the Temple and is constructing articles for its operation.

Since 1989, the Temple Mount Faithful has been trying to place a large stone on the Temple Mount as the cornerstone of the Third Temple. (The first stone was stolen and was replaced in 2001 by two stones.) Each year they parade the stones through Jerusalem on a truck to stir up support for their objective.

In 1986, **the Temple Institute** was founded with the goal “to see Israel rebuild the Holy Temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem.” Like the Temple Mount Faithful (but with competing plans), the Institute is preparing articles to be used in the new Temple. At much expense (\$20 million has been donated so far) and based on extensive research they have fashioned priestly garments, the high priest’s golden crown costing \$30,000, the high priest’s breastplate with its 12 precious stones inscribed with the names of the tribes of Israel, a copper laver, an incense altar, silver trumpets, gold- and silver-plated shofars, harps, and many other things.

Of special interest is the large menorah that has been fashioned from 95 pounds of pure gold, valued at \$2 million. In December 2007 the menorah was moved to an outside location on the Western Wall Plaza across from the Temple Mount. Prior to that it had stood in the old Roman Cardo. The plan is to move the menorah ever closer to the Temple Mount itself and ultimately to place it in the Third Temple. The Temple Institute compared the 2007 dedication of the menorah in its new location to the dedication of the Arch of Titus in Rome 1,900 years ago. Then, the

menorah was moving away from the Temple, whereas today it is moving back toward the Temple.

The Temple Institute is constructing a full-scale model of the Temple (covering 269,000 square feet) near the Dead Sea to use for training priests.

The founder and director of the Temple Institute, Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, was a member of the paratrooper unit that liberated the Temple Mount.

Both the Temple Mount Faithful and the Temple Institute have received support from Christians, particularly from charismatics. The Temple Mount Faithful, for example, has been heavily promoted by Pat Robertson's *700 Club*. Even though the Bible says it is the Antichrist who will occupy the Third Temple, these gullible, emotionally-led Christians have given millions of dollars toward the project. The Apostle Paul was persecuted by the Christ-rejecting Pharisees, but these modern Christians join hands with the descendants of the Pharisees in spiritual projects. We believe that Christians should bless and not curse Israel, but this does not mean that we should support their apostasy. The best way to bless the Temple Institute is to preach the Gospel to its members.

In Jewish tradition, the rebuilding of the Temple is associated with the coming of the Messiah. According to Maimonides (also called Rambam), the highest rabbinical authority, any Jew that starts rebuilding the Temple is a potential Messiah. Shimon ben Kosiba was considered a Messiah in the second century when he led a revolt to recapture Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. He was named *Bar Kokhba* ("Son of the Star") based on the Messianic prophecy of Numbers 24:17, and a coin was struck depicting the Temple with the Ark of the Covenant inside and the Messianic star on the roof.

By this tradition, it is simple to see how the Antichrist will be looked upon as the Messiah.

A Messiah That Will Come When Things Look Dark

In an interview in Jerusalem a Reformed Jewish rabbi told us that the Messiah will come when things look really dark and will establish peace. He said:

"Jerusalem is to be whole, and when the Messiah comes the temple will be returned to us. But that can't happen until there is eternal peace. Ultimately we have to go deeper into destruction before we come out into the light and until God redeems not only the Jewish people but also the rest of the world. Peace has to come, but peace can only come when things get really dark. Then Elijah will come and announce the coming of the Messiah, and the Messiah will come from the Mount of Olives directly to the Temple Mount and will proclaim that the time has come for the rebuilding of the Third Temple."

The representative of the Temple Institute said the same thing:

"We are waiting for a Messiah. In Jewish tradition, we believe that in every generation there is someone who can be the Messiah. The question is who will he be. The answer is only someone who does specific things can be called the Messiah. The one who brings Israel back to Israel. The

one who builds the temple again. The one who makes Israel go according to the commandments. After that he can be called the Messiah.”

This is a description of the Messiah as a Super Problem Solver, which is exactly how the Antichrist will present himself.

NOT a Saviour from sin

It is important to understand that the Jews are not looking for a Messiah to take away their sins. They have no sacrifices, and they are content with that, thinking that they don't need a blood atonement. They even have a bloodless, lambless Passover and Day of Atonement.

We asked a Reformed Jewish rabbi, “How do you purge your sins?” and he replied, “We ask God for forgiveness through prayer and through actions.”

When asked about Leviticus 17:11, “... it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul,” the rabbi said that to interpret that as meaning that man needs a literal blood sacrifice to be acceptable to God is a false interpretation. He was cock sure about this.

Our guide told us that the Jewish fathers have determined that prayer has taken the place of the sacrifices and that blood is not necessary.

The representative at the Temple Institute said the same thing:

“God knows that we don't have the sacrifices. That is why He has given us a different way of atonement, and that's by prayers. We have prayers that great rabbis wrote just after the destructions, and we say these prayers and that's as if we are sacrificing.”

The Jews stumbled at the suffering Messiah 2,000 years ago. They were looking for a Messiah to save them from Rome and provide for them, not a Messiah that would die for them. They wanted a king, not a Saviour.

Why should they need a suffering Messiah when they don't even think of themselves as sinners!

Not once did I hear a Jew say, “We are suffering because of our great sin against God.”

There is no such statement at the Temple Institute. Its web site features a history of the Jewish nation and of the Temple in particular, and though they document the destruction of the First and Second Temples there is not a word about Israel's sin.

There is no such statement at the Holocaust Museum.

When we asked the aforementioned American rabbi if he is a sinner, he looked around for awhile in sort of an astonished, perplexed manner and even had to be asked the second time before admitting that “we all make mistakes in the world.” But he only admitted to mistakes and

“negative inclinations,” not to sin. He hastened to say that the Jew’s righteousness is in the Torah, the Law of Moses, and in the Talmud, the rabbinical tradition.

This is the same blindness and spiritual stubbornness that Paul wrote about 2,000 years ago:

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” (Romans 9:30-33).

Thus, the Jews are looking for a Messiah that will bring peace, that will solve their problems, that will help them to rebuild the Temple, that will allow them to follow their tradition on equal footing with the Scripture, and that will not rebuke them as sinners but will help them follow their “positive inclinations.”

The Antichrist will be all of this and more--at first.

When the Antichrist comes, he will appear to be a sincere man who wants to help the world. He will not appear to be a monster. He will have a powerful personality with more charisma than any ruler that has preceded him in history. He will be an astounding orator, speaking “great things” (Dan. 7:8). He will be bold and authoritative. Daniel says he will have a fierce countenance and understand dark sentences (Dan. 8:23). He will be a master of intrigue and have an astonishing ability to solve age-old problems.

But it will be a lie. Five times in Daniel the Antichrist is called a liar and a flatterer (Dan. 11:21, 23, 27, 32, 34). After three and a half years, he will show his true nature, and his peace program will bring “sudden destruction” in the form of the greatest time of trouble the world has ever seen.

This is described in more detail in the next prophecy:

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:14-21).

The abomination of desolation is the idolatrous image of the Antichrist that will be set up in the Jewish Temple. Daniel says they “shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the

abomination that maketh desolate” in its stead (Daniel 11:31). This marks the mid-way point of the seven years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

At this time the Great Tribulation will begin. The Antichrist will show his satanic hatred of the Jews and will begin to persecute them. Thus, Jesus warns them to flee to the mountains.

The following frightful prophecy describes God’s attitude toward the Third Temple:

“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not” (Isaiah 66:1-4).

God says that He doesn’t want a Temple; He wants obedience and righteousness (Isa. 66:1-2).

Since the Temple will be built by Christ-rejecting Jews who are in rebellion to God’s Word, their sacrifices are not acceptable (Isa. 66:3). They might as well sacrifice a dog as a lamb, because they rejected the Lamb of God (John 1:29). Even the most zealous Jews in Israel today do not understand the significance of the sacrifices demanded by their own holy Torah. They do not acknowledge that without shedding of blood is no remission of sin. In fact, as we have seen, they do not even acknowledge that they are sinners.

God warned that He will smite Israel with spiritual blindness because of her stubborn disobedience (Isa. 66:4). God cannot be blamed. He sent the prophets and they stoned them. He sent His own Son and they cried out, “Crucify him; crucify him.”

What more could God have done?

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